

## **Type 2 Diabetes – Plan For Schools**

### **Schools**

The increase in type 2 diabetes among children makes schools essential partners in preventing the disease. Some specific activities for schools and teachers to consider include:

- Educate and share health promotion messages about sound nutrition and regular physical activity with teachers, school nurses, students, and parents.
- Educate children about the importance of balanced nutrition and regular exercise in preventing diabetes.
- Encourage children to develop plans for better nutrition and exercise and ways to measure their progress.
- Engage parents to increase their understanding of the importance of healthier diets and the benefits of exercise.
- Offer regular physical education/gym classes.
- Provide opportunities for unstructured activities for all ages at lunch and during breaks. For elementary school children, this might include actively participating in physical activities on the playground. For older students, sports equipment can be provided (e.g., basketballs, tennis rackets, etc.), with coaches encouraging participation in activities.
- Provide opportunities for nontraditional sports and alternatives to team sports for students who may not have the same physical talents as their peers.
- Provide after-school activities through the school or in partnership with other organizations, such as city parks and recreation leagues, religious organizations, community YMCAs, or Boys and Girls Clubs.
- Provide tasty food options that are low in saturated fats and include fruits, vegetables, nuts, and whole grains for cafeteria and food cart choices.
- Provide healthy alternatives, such as milk, low-calorie beverages, or water in vending machines and in the cafeteria.
- Solicit help from school staff in setting examples for healthier eating and increased exercise.
- Foster the benefits of exercise through fun competitions and activities. For example, sponsor contests among teacher and student groups to register the most steps on their pedometers.
- Encourage all students to participate in exercise and support each other regardless of different abilities.
- Partner with State Health and Education Department and Community
- Develop a Coordinated School Health Initiative

Source: *Diabetes: A National Plan For Action*  
<http://aspe.hhs.gov/health/NDAP/NDAP04.pdf>